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SRI M. JAGANNATHAN :—" May I know from the Hon. Minister whether the members of these Hospital Advisory Committees are paid any travelling allowances for attending such meetings? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" No, Sir."

State Health Insurance Scheme.

* 12 *Q.*—SRI N. K. PALANISAMI : Will the Hon. the Minister for Industries and Labour be pleased to state—

(*a*) the number of workers in this State to be benefited under the State Health Insurance Scheme; and

(*b*) the amount granted to the State for implementing the same?

THE HON. DR. U. KRISHNA RAO :—" (*a*) The medical benefit scheme under the Employees' State Insurance Act has not yet been implemented in this State. A proposal to introduce the scheme in the first instance in Coimbatore and its suburbs is now under consideration. If it is approved, it will benefit about 36,000 workers in this area.

" (*b*) No amount has been granted so far. The expenditure on the medical benefit scheme will be shared by the Employees' State Insurance Corporation and the State Government in the ratio of 2:1 when the scheme is introduced."

11-30 a.m. SRI N. K. PALANISAMI :—" இந்தத் திட்டத்தின் பிரகாரம் தேயிலைத் தோட்ட தொழிலாளர்களுக்கு ஏதாவது நன்மை கிடைக்குமா? அப்படி கிடைக்காவிட்டால் ஏன் அவர்களை இந்த திட்டத்தில் சேர்க்கவில்லை? மேலும் இந்தத் திட்டம் எப்பொழுது அமுலுக்கு வரும்? இந்த திட்டம் எப்ரல் மாதம் முதல் தேதி அமுலுக்கு வருவதாக இருந்ததே? "

THE HON. DR. U. KRISHNA RAO :—" This Act applies now to all factories using power employing twenty or more persons and engaged in a manufacturing process. Seasonal factories, mines and railway running sheds are excluded from the scope of the Act. All employees, whether permanent, temporary, casual, clerical or supervisory, other than those drawing a remuneration exceeding four hundred rupees a month come within the purview of the medical benefit scheme. Persons employed in the Armed Forces do not come within the scope of the Act at present. Therefore the categories of persons mentioned by the hon. Member do not come under the scope of this Act."

SRI M. PALANIYANDI :—" Sir இந்தத் திட்டமானது 20 தொழிலாளர்கள் கொண்டதும் மின்சாரத்தால் ஓடும் தொழிற்சாலைகளுக்கும் விஸ்தரிக்கப்பட்டிருக்கிறது என்று சொன்னார்கள். அதுவும் கோயமுத்தூர் ஜில்லாவில் மாத்திரம் முதலில் விஸ்தரிக்கப்பட்டிருப்பதாகவும் சொன்னார்கள். எங்கெங்கெல்லாம் தொழிற்சாலைகளில் ஆஸ்பத்திரிகள் இயங்குகின்றனவோ அங்கெல்லாம் இந்தத் திட்டத்தை விஸ்தரிப்பதற்கு அரசாங்கம் முன் வருமா? "

THE HON. DR. U. KRISHNA RAO :—" As to what exactly we should do with the hospitals in the various factories is under consideration. The Government propose to appoint a

committee to inspect these hospitals. If they come up to the standard required by this scheme, they will certainly be taken.''

SRI N. K. PALANISAMI :—'' இந்தத் திட்டம் எப்ரல் மாதம் முதல் தேதி அமுலுக்கு வரப்போகிறது என்று சொல்லி இருக்கிறார்கள். அம்மாதிரியே எப்ரல் மாதம் முதல் தேதி இந்த திட்டம் அமுலுக்கு வருமா ? ''

THE HON. DR. U. KRISHNA RAO :—'' It was the intention of the Government to implement this scheme on the first of April. But the negotiations between the doctors and the Employees' State Insurance Corporation did not materialise in the first instance. The Government therefore thought that they should employ paid men. But now, I am happy to say, the doctors have agreed to implement the scheme, and therefore a revision of the plan may have to be made. I am doubtful if it will be possible to implement the scheme on the first of April, but still we will try our very best.''

SRI L. C. PAIS :—'' Having regard to the present condition of the State's finances, do the Government feel confident that they will be able to introduce this scheme in more than one place in the near future? ''

THE HON. DR. U. KRISHNA RAO :—'' This is a social security measure for labour and we feel that at least in one place we should implement it. We selected Coimbatore because it contains the largest number of women workers—12,000 out of 36,000. I know that the point raised by the hon. Member is relevant. In view of the fact that the State's finances are not very good, we may not implement the scheme in all factories at present. We propose to implement it in Madras and Madurai, if funds are available after implementing the scheme in Coimbatore.''

SRI K. P. GOPALAN :—'' May I know from the Hon. Minister for Labour whether the Government will take steps to implement the scheme throughout the State at least before the end of this year and whether they will consider the extension of this scheme to Malabar as early as possible? ''

THE HON. DR. U. KRISHNA RAO :—'' As I said, it is a question depending upon the availability of funds. I must also add that according to my information, in the whole of the West Coast there are not more than 7,000 workers employed in factories employing twenty persons or more. If the hon. Members consider also that this 7,000 is distributed throughout the district, they will realise the difficulty of implementing the scheme on the West Coast.''

SRI A. SAMBASIVAM :—'' தலைவர் அவர்களே, இப்பொழுது இருபதும், அதற்கு மேலும் தொழிலாளர்கள் உள்ள தொழிற்சாலைகளில் இந்தத் திட்டத்தை அமுலுக்குக் கொண்டுவரப்போவதால் சில முதலாளிகள் இருபது பேர்களுக்குக் குறைவாக தங்களது தொழிற்சாலைகளில் தொழிலாளர்களை குறைத்துக்கொள்வதற்கு முயற்சிக்கிறார்கள். அப்படிக் குறைக்காமல் இருப்பதற்கு அரசாங்கம் முன் எச்சரிக்கையாக நடவடிக்கைகள் எடுக்குமா ? ''

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THE HON. DR. U. KRISHNA RAO :—" We have a list of factories employing twenty or more persons. If any managements try to get out of the purview of this Act by retrenching their staff, we shall of course look into the matter and see whether the reduction in the number of employees is really justified or whether the deduction is effected merely to evade coming within the purview of this Act."

SRI M. PALANIYANDI :—" இந்தத் திட்டத்தை விஸ்தரிக்கப்போவதன் காரணத்தால் ஆங்காங்குள்ள ஆலை முதலாளிகள் தாங்களே முன் வந்து ஆஸ்பத்திரிகளை கட்டுகிறோம் என்றவர்கள் இப்பொழுது கட்டாமல் இருக்கிறார்கள். அவர்களைக் கட்டும்படி அரசாங்கம் வற்புறுத்துமா ?"

THE HON. DR. U. KRISHNA RAO :—" Such a complaint has been made in certain quarters. The Government have appealed to mill owners and factory owners that, as a result of this scheme they should neither decrease the existing medical facilities nor reduce the pace with which hospitals are constructed in the mills or factories."

SRI S. C. C. ANTHONY PILLAI :—" Have the Government undertaken any survey of industrial areas other than Coimbatore for implementing the scheme as expeditiously as possible? "

THE HON. DR. U. KRISHNA RAO :—" We have taken a rough estimate of the number of workers. We find that in Madras City we have about 30,000 workers of whom about 8,000 are women workers. We have in Madurai about 30,000 workers of whom about 10,000 are women workers. These are the big pockets where this scheme may profitably be introduced, if funds are available after implementing the scheme in Coimbatore."

SRI K. MADHAVAN NAMBIAR :—" How much money are the Government going to contribute for each worker? "

THE HON. DR. U. KRISHNA RAO :—" The employer's share of the contribution ranges from 7 annas to Rs. 2–8–0 per week per employee, the actual amount depending upon the average daily wage. For this purpose, the employees are divided into 8 wage groups. The lowest group consists of those who are paid below Re. 1 and no contribution is required from the employees in this wage group. A low rate of 2 annas per week is levied on the wage group drawing from Re. 1 to Rs. 1–8–0 and 4 annas from the wage group drawing from Rs. 1–8–0 to Rs. 2. In the case of the higher wage groups, two-thirds of the contribution is paid by the employer and one-third by the employee. So far as the Central and the State Governments are concerned, they are going to bear the capital expenditure in the proportion of 2 : 1."

SRI S. C. C. ANTHONY PILLAI :—" What amount of money will be spent by the Government when the scheme is implemented in Coimbatore? "

THE HON. DR. U. KRISHNA RAO :—" We do not have the exact figures. But on a rough estimate it is computed that the Madras Government's share will be in the neighbourhood of 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs of rupees."

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SRI V. BALAKRISHNAN :—" Instead of confining the scheme to all the workers in one area, why should it not be applied to all the women workers on a State-wide basis? "

THE HON. DR. U. KRISHNA RAO :—" The present scheme envisages medical benefit, sickness benefit and disablement benefit for all workers and the women workers get maternity benefit in addition. It is better to give these benefits to all workers instead of restricting them to women only, and so the Government have decided to apply the scheme to all workers."

Recommendations of the Jail Reforms Committee.

* 13 *Q*.—SRI K. T. SREEDHARAN (on behalf of Sri M. Narayana Kurup): Will the Hon. the Minister for Law be pleased to state how far the recommendations of the Jail Reforms Committee have been implemented?

THE HON. SRI K. P. KUTTIKRISHNAN NAIR :—" Orders have been passed on certain recommendations in regard to classification of Jails; appointment of non-official visitors, medical relief in jails, and health of prisoners. The other recommendations which are extensive in scope, many having financial implications and requiring legislative amendments, are under the detailed consideration of the heads of departments concerned and of the Government."

SRI C. KUNHIRAMA KURUP :—" How long will it take to implement the recommendations completely? "

THE HON. SRI K. P. KUTTIKRISHNAN NAIR :—" It may take a few months."

SRI V. GOPALA GOUNDER :—" May I know whether there is any proposal to amend the Jail Manual in the light of the recommendations of the Jail Reforms Committee? "

THE HON. SRI K. P. KUTTIKRISHNAN NAIR :—" That is why the report is being examnied."

SRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN :—" The Hon. Minister answered that some of the recommendations were still under consideration. The Communist Party and the other parties in the Opposition are threatening to capture power. If they come into power, I am afraid many of us on this side are likely to be put behind the bars. Therefore, may I ask the hon. Minister to implement expeditiously the recommendations relating to the provision of more amenities to prisoners, particularly the 'C' class prisoners as the Communist Party will put us only in the 'C' class? " (Laughter.)

THE HON. SRI K. P. KUTTIKRISHNAN NAIR :—" I do not think we need be under any such apprehension in the present circumstances." 11-40 a.m.

DR. K. B. MENON :—" In view of financial difficulties in the introduction of changes on a large scale basis in the jail administration, will the Government, consider the introduction of essential changes in selected jails and make them model jails? "